

July 30, 2012

Postal Regulatory Commission
901 New York Ave NW, Suite 200
Washington, DC 20268

Reference: PRC Docket # MC2012-26

Dear Commissioners,

I am the Area Support Manager of 43 Northern Virginia UPS Stores. The UPS Stores of the VA107 Area encompass Arlington County, the city of Alexandria, Fairfax County, Loudoun County and Prince William County, each store is independently owned and operated. Collectively the stores employ in excess of 200 people. I am writing to ask that you disallow the United States Post Office's "enhanced" services to Post Office Box customers, specifically:

1. Acceptance of third-party parcels and other items from UPS, FedEx, DHL and other non-USPS carriers, a practice that has been prohibited for many years.
2. The new ability to use the street address of the Post Office where the Post Office Box is located, rather than the conventional "PO Box 123, Anytown, MA 01234."
3. The new ability of Post Office Box customers to use the "#123" designation instead of the conventional "PO Box 123" form of address.
4. E-mail / text message notification to PO Box customers of items received. ("Real Mail Notification")

These new business practices place the United States Postal Service in direct and unequal competition with thousands of small businesses across the country. Our UPS Stores are privately owned and for many franchisees, represent the sole source of their income. In many cases, they have financed the purchase of the business with loans secured by their homes. This new form of competition from the USPS will result in significant loss of revenue and damage to the franchisees business. That will threaten not only their homes, but also the jobs of the people they employ.

As Commercial Mail Receiving Agencies (CMRA), their business is regulated and inspected by the USPS. There is no other enterprise in our society where one competitor can regulate another, even to the point of requiring them to turn over their customer list on a quarterly basis.

As a CMRA, they operate under other unfair rules, such as the ability of a postal customer to change his address from a PO Box to another address with a simple "Change of Address" form, while customers of a CMRA are prohibited from doing so. When a CMRA mailbox customer moves, the franchisees are required by the USPS to receive the customer's mail for six months following termination and cannot re-mail it without paying for new postage, unlike the USPS mailbox holders.

As noted in PRC Order No. 1366, “the Postal Service has not submitted an appropriate filing that describes the nature and implementing rules for these enhanced services.” The USPS failed to follow the rules in rolling out these new services, and made a unilateral decision and executed it without the necessary filings. What the USPS is doing is fundamentally wrong. A financially viable Post Office is an important part of our business, but not at our expense. A relationship with the USPS is a careful balance of competition and support, and in this instance they have tipped the scales. It is unfair to allow the USPS to launch a series of products and services specifically designed to take the UPS Store customers.

Thank you for your time and kind attention to this matter. Please do not hesitate to contact me if you have any questions or concerns.

Sincerely,

Kimberly Hartsoe
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